DECL. OF ANNETTE GIFFORD ISO PLS' ADMIN MOT TO CONTINUE CONFERENCE Case No. CV 07-5696 SI

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- I, Annette Gifford, under penalty of perjury, declare:
- 1. I am associated with the law firm Dolin, Thomas & Solomon LLP, lead counsel for Plaintiffs in this action, and, as such, I am fully familiar with the facts and circumstances giving rise to this motion. I submit this Declaration in support of Plaintiffs' Administrative Motion to Continue Case Management Conference. The facts contained herein are based upon my own personal knowledge, and if called to do so, I could and would competently testify to their truth.
- 2. This Court has previously ruled that the instant action ("Bryant I") is related to two other pending actions, Helm, et al. v. Alderwoods Group, Inc., et al., Case No. 08-1184-SI ("Helm") and Bryant, et al. v. Service Corporation International, et al., Case No. 08-1190-SI ("Bryant II"). See Bryant I, Docket Nos. 35 and 38.
- 3. Currently, a case management conference in the instant action is scheduled for Monday, April 7, 2008 (the "Conference"). *See Bryant I*, Docket No. 39.
- 4. On March 18, 2008, this Court issued an Order to Show Cause indicating that the Court intends to consider at the Conference the issue of whether any of the three related matters should be transferred to the Western District of Pennsylvania. *See Bryant I*, Docket No. 37; *Bryant II*, Docket No. 32.
- 5. Plaintiffs timely filed motions to remand both the *Helm* and the *Bryant II* matters to state court and those motions are currently scheduled to be heard on May 9, 2008. *See Helm*, Docket No. 43; *Bryant I*, Docket No. 34.
- 6. Plaintiffs' counsel attempted to obtain a stipulation to an extension of time to respond to Defendants' Motions during a telephone conference on March 26, 2008. During that telephone conference, counsel for defendants stated that defendants would object to plaintiffs' request.
- 7. Plaintiffs believe that it would be an inefficient use of judicial resources to conduct the Conference prior to a determination regarding plaintiffs' pending motions for remand.

- 8. The issue of this Court's subject matter jurisdiction over the two state law actions is a threshold issue which must be determined before this Court takes any other action with respect to these cases. Should the Court conclude there is no federal jurisdiction over the alleged state law claims, the *Helm* and *Bryant II* actions would be remanded to state court and this Court's inquiry into whether those matters should be transferred to another District Court would be rendered moot. Similarly, any issues of case management addressed at the Conference would be more efficiently addressed only after this Court has determined whether it has subject matter jurisdiction over the *Helm* and *Bryant II* actions.
- 9. Thus, plaintiffs submit that the Conference should be postponed until after this Court's ruling regarding the motions for remand.
- 10. There have been no previous time modifications in this case, whether by stipulation or Court order. In a separate Administrative Motion, plaintiffs have requested similar relief with respect to defendants' currently pending motions, also on grounds that this Court must determine the threshold issue raised in the motions for remand prior to determining those pending motions.
- 11. In the event the Court grants Plaintiffs' request for a continuance of the Conference, there would be no substantial adverse effect on the schedule for this case.

Executed this 27th day of March, 2008 in Rochester, New York.

Annette Gifford

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